
The Dangers from Slavery.

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FROM A SERMON ON "THE DANGERS WHICH THREATEN THE RIGHTS OF MAN IN AMERICA," PREACHED IN MUSIC HALL, BOSTON,
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There can be no national welfare without national Unity of Action. That cannot take place unless there is national Unity of Idea in fundamentals. Without this a nation is a "house divided against itself": of course it cannot stand. It is what mechanics call a figure without equilibrium: the different parts thereof do not balance.

Now in the American State there are two distinct ideas,— Freedom and Slavery.

The Idea of Freedom first got a national expression seventy-eight years ago next Tuesday. Here it is. I put it in a philosophic form. There are five points to it.

First. All men are endowed by their Creator with certain natural rights, amongst which is the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

Second. These rights are unalienable; they can be alienated and forfeited only by the possessor thereof; the father cannot alienate them for the son, nor the son for the father; nor the husband for the wife, nor the wife for the husband; nor the strong for the weak, nor the weak for the strong; nor the few for the many, nor the many for the few; and so on.

Third. In respect to these all men are equal; the rich man has not more, and the poor less; the strong man has not more, and the weak man less: all are exactly equal in these rights, however unequal in their powers.

Fourth. It is the function of government to secure these natural, unalienable, and equal rights to every man.

Fifth. Government derives all its divine right from its conformity with these ideas, all its human sanction from the consent of the governed.

That is the Idea of Freedom. I used to call it "the American Idea": it was when I was younger than I am to-day. It is derived from human nature; it rests on the immutable Laws of God; it is part of the natural religion of mankind. It demands a government after natural Justice, which is the point common between the conscience of God and the conscience of mankind, the point common also between the interests of one man and of all men.

Now this government, just in its substance, in its form must be democratic; that is to say, the government of all, by all, and for all. You see what consequences must follow from such an idea, and the attempt to re-enact the Law of God into political institutions. There will follow the freedom of the people, respect for every natural right of all men, the rights of their body, and of their spirit;— the rights of mind and conscience, heart and soul. There must be some restraint,— as of children by their parents, as of bad men by good men; but it will be restraint for the joint good of all parties concerned, not restraint for the exclusive benefit of the restrainer. The ultimate consequence of this will be the material and spiritual welfare of all,— riches, comfort, noble manhood, all desirable things.

That is the Idea of Freedom. It appears in the Declaration of Independence; it reappears in the Preamble to the American Constitution, which aims "to establish Justice, insure domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defence, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of Liberty." That is a religious idea; and, when men pray for the "Reign of Justice" and the "Kingdom of Heaven" to come on earth politically, I suppose they mean that there may be a Commonwealth where every man has his natural rights of mind, body, and estate.

Next is the Idea of Slavery. Here it is. I put it also in a philosophic form. There are three points which I make.

First. There are no natural, unalienable, and equal rights, wherewith men are endowed by their Creator; no natural, unalienable, and equal right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

Second. There is a great diversity of powers, and in virtue thereof the strong man may rule and oppress, enslave and ruin the weak, for his interest and against theirs.

Third. There is no natural law of God to forbid the strong to oppress the weak, and enslave and ruin the weak.

That is the Idea of Slavery. It has never got a national expression in America ; it has never been laid down as a Principle in any act of the American people, nor in any single State, so far as I know. All profess the opposite ; but it is involved in the measures of both State and Nation. This Idea is founded in the selfishness of man ; it is atheistic.

The idea must lead to a corresponding government ; that will be unjust in its substance,—for it will depend not on natural right, but on personal force ; not on the Constitution of the Universe, but on the compact of men. It is the abnegation of God in the universe and of conscience in man. Its form will be despotism,—the government of all, by a part, for the sake of a part. It may be a single-headed despotism, or a despotism of many heads ; but, whether a Cyclops or a Hydra, it is alike “the abomination which maketh desolate.” Its ultimate consequence is plain to foresee,—poverty to a nation, misery, ruin.

At first, Slavery came as a Measure ; nothing was said about it as a Principle. But in a country full of schoolmasters, legislatures, newspapers, talking men,—a measure without a principle to bear it up is like a single twig of willow cast out on a wooden floor ; there is nothing for it to grow by ; it will die. So of late the principle has been boldly avowed. Mr. Calhoun denied the self-evident truths of the Declaration of Independence ; denied the natural, unalienable, and equal rights of man. Many since have done the same,—political, literary, and mercantile men, and, of course, ecclesiastical men ; there are enough of them always in the market. All parts of the Idea of Slavery have been affirmed by prominent men at the North and the South. It has been acted on in the formation of the Constitution of every Slave State, and in the passage of many of its laws. It lies at the basis of a great deal of national legislation. . . .

These two Ideas are now fairly on foot. They are hostile ; they are both mutually invasive and destructive. They are in exact opposition to each other, and the nation which embodies these two is not a figure of equilibrium. As both are active

forces in the minds of men, and as each idea tends to become a fact,—a universal and exclusive fact,—as men with these ideas organize into parties as a means to make their idea into a fact,—it follows that there must not only be strife amongst philosophical men about these antagonistic Principles and Ideas, but a strife of practical men about corresponding Facts and Measures. So the quarrel, if not otherwise ended, will pass from words to what seems more serious; and one will overcome the other.

So long as these two Ideas exist in the nation as two political forces, there is no national Unity of Idea, of course no Unity of Action. For there is no centre of gravity common to Freedom and Slavery. They will not compose an equilibrious figure. You may cry, "Peace! peace!" but so long as these two antagonistic Ideas remain, each seeking to organize itself and get exclusive power, there is no peace; there can be none.

The question before the nation to-day is, Which shall prevail,—the Idea and Fact of Freedom or the Idea and the Fact of Slavery; Freedom, exclusive and universal, or Slavery, exclusive and universal? The question is not merely, Shall the African be bond or free? but, Shall America be a Democracy or a Despotism? For nothing is so remorseless as an idea, and no logic is so strong as the historical development of a national idea by millions of men. A measure is nothing without its Principle. The idea which allows Slavery in South Carolina will establish it also in New England. The bondage of a black man in Alexandria imperils every white woman's daughter in Boston. You cannot escape the consequences of a first Principle more than you can "take the leap of Niagara and stop when half-way down." The Principle which recognizes Slavery in the Constitution of the United States would make all America a Despotism; while the principle which made John Quincy Adams a free man would extirpate Slavery from Louisiana and Texas. It is plain America cannot long hold these two contradictions in the national consciousness. Equilibrium must come.

Now there are three possible ways of settling the quarrel between these two Ideas; only three. The categories are exhaustive.

This is the first: The discord may rend the nation asunder, and the two elements separate and become distinct nations,—a Despotism with the Idea of Slavery, a Democracy with the

Idea of Freedom. Then each will be an equilibrious figure. The Anglo-Saxon Despotism may go to ruin on its own account, while the Anglo-Saxon Democracy marches on to national welfare. That is the first hypothesis.

Or, second: The Idea of Freedom may destroy Slavery, with all its accidents,—attendant and consequent. Then the nation may have unity of idea, and so a unity of action, and become a harmonious whole, a Unit of Freedom, a great industrial Democracy, re-enacting the laws of God, and pursuing its way, continually attaining greater degrees of freedom and prosperity. That is the second hypothesis.

Here is the third: The Idea of Slavery may destroy Freedom, with all its accidents,—attendant and consequent. Then the nation will become an integer; only it will be a Unit of Despotism. This involves, of course, the destructive revolution of all our liberal institutions, State as well as national. Democracy must go down; the free press go down; the free church go down; the free school go down. There must be an industrial despotism, which will soon become a military despotism. Popular legislation must end; the Federal Congress will be a club of officials, like Nero's senate, which voted his horse first consul. The State legislature will be a knot of commissioners, tide-waiters, postmasters, district attorneys, deputy marshals. The town-meeting will be a gang of government officers, like the "Marshal's Guard," revolvers in their pockets, soldiers at their back. The *Habeas Corpus* will be at an end; trial by jury never heard of, and open courts as common in America as in Spain or Rome. Commissioners Curtis, Loring, and Kane, will not be exceptional men; there will be no other "judges"; all courts, courts of the kidnapper; all process summary; all cases decided by the will of the government; arbitrary force the only rule. The constable will disappear, the soldier come forth. All newspapers will be like the "Satanic press" of Boston and New York, like the Journal of St. Petersburg or the Diario Romano, which tell lies when the ruler commands, or tell truth when he insists upon it. Then the wicked will walk on every side, for the vilest of men will be exalted, and America, become the mock and scorn and hissing of the nations, will go down to worse shame than was ever heaped upon Sodom; for with her lust for wealth, land, and power, she also will have committed the crime against nature. Then America will be another Italy, Greece, Asia Minor, yea,

like Gomorrah ; for the Dead Sea will have settled down upon us with nothing living in its breast, and the rulers will proclaim Peace where they have made solitude.

Which of these three hypotheses shall we take ?

I. Will there be a Separation of the two elements, and a formation of two distinct States,— Freedom with Democracy, and Slavery with a tendency to despotism? That may save one-half the nation, and leave the other to voluntary ruin. Certainly, it is better to enter into life halt or maimed rather than having two hands and two feet to be cast into everlasting fire. . . .

But I do not think this “ dissolution of the Union ” will take place immediately or very soon. For America is not now ruled — as it is commonly thought — either by the mass of men who follow their national, ethnological, and human instincts, or by a few far-sighted men of genius for politics, who consciously obey the Law of God made clear in their own masterly mind and conscience, and make statutes in advance of the calculation or even the instincts of the people, and so manage the Ship of State that every occasional tack is on a great circle of the Universe, a right line of Justice, and therefore the shortest way to welfare, but by two very different classes of men,— by Mercantile men, who covet money, actual or expectant Capitalists ; and by Political men, who want power, actual or expectant office-holders. These appear diverse ; but there is a strong unanimity between the two,— for the mercantile men want money as a means of power and the political men power as a means of money. There are noble men in both classes, exceptional, not instantial, men with great riches even, and great office. But, as a class, these men are not above the average morality of the people, often below it ; they have no deep religious faith, which leads them to trust the Higher Law of God. They do not look for Principles that are right, conformable to the Constitution of the Universe, and so creative of the nation’s permanent welfare, but only for expedient Measures, productive to themselves of selfish money or selfish power. In general, they have the character of adventurers, the aims of adventurers, the morals of adventurers ; they begin poor, and of course obscure, and are then “ democratic,” and hurrah for the people : “ Down with the powerful and the rich,” is the private maxim of their heart. If they are successful and become rich, famous, attaining high office, they

commonly despise the people : " Down with the people ! " is the axiom of their heart,— only they dare not say it ; for there are so many others with the same selfishness, who have not yet achieved their end, and raise the opposite cry. The line of the nation's course is a resultant of the compound selfishness of these two classes.

From these two, with their mercantile and political selfishness, we are to expect no comprehensive Morality, which will secure the Rights of mankind ; no comprehensive policy which will secure expedient measures for a long time. Both will unite in what serves their apparent interest, brings money to the trader, power to the politician,— whatever be the consequence to the country.

As things now are, the Union favors the schemes of both of these classes of men ; thereby the politician gets power, the trader makes money.

If the Union were to be dissolved and a great Northern Commonwealth were to be organized, with the Idea of Freedom, three-quarters of the Politicians, Federal and State, would pass into contempt and oblivion ; all that class of Northern demagogues who scoff at God's Law, such as filled the offices of the late Whig administration in its day of power or as fill the offices of the Democratic administration to-day,— they would drop down so deep that no plummet would ever reach them ; you would never hear of them again.

Gratitude is not a very common virtue ; but gratitude to the hand of Slavery, which feeds these creatures, is their sole and single moral excellence ; they have that form of gratitude. When the hand of Slavery is cut off, that class of men will perish just as caterpillars die when, some day in May, the farmer cuts off from the old tree a great branch to graft in a better fruit. The caterpillars will not vote for the grafting. That class of men will go for the Union while it serves them.

Look at the other class. Property is safe in America ; and why ? Because we have aimed to establish a government on natural rights, and property is a natural right ; say oligarchic Blackstone and socialistic Proudhon what they may, property is not the mere creature of compact or the child of robbery ; it is founded in the Nature of Man. It has a very great and important function to perform. Nowhere in the world is it so much respected as here.

But there is one kind of property which is not safe just now,

— Property in Men. It is the only kind of property which is purely the creature of violence and law; it has no root in itself.

Now the Union protects that "property." There are three hundred thousand Slave-holders, owning thirteen hundred millions of dollars invested in men. Their wealth depends on the Union; destroy that, and their unnatural property will take to itself legs and run off, seeking liberty by flight, or else stay at home and, like an Anglo-Saxon, take to itself firebrands and swords, and burn down the master's house and cut the master's throat. So the Slave-holder wants the Union; he makes money by it. Slavery is unprofitable to the nation. No three millions earn so little as the three million Slaves. It is costly to every State. But it enriches the owner of the Slaves. The South is agricultural; that is all. She raises cotton, sugar, and corn; she has no commerce, no manufactures, no mining. The North has mills, ships, mines, manufactures; buys and sells for the South, and makes money by what impoverishes the South. So all the great commercial centres of the North are in favor of Union, in favor of Slavery. The instinct of American trade just now is hostile to American Freedom. The Money Power and the Slave Power go hand in hand. Of course such editors and ministers as are only the tools of the Money Power or the Slave Power will be fond of "Union at all hazards." They will sell their mothers to keep it. Now these are the controlling classes of men; these ministers and editors are the mouth-pieces of these controlling classes of men; and, as these classes make money and power out of the Union, for the present I think the Union will hold together. Yet I know very well that there are causes now at work which embitter the minds of men, and which, if much enforced, will so exasperate the North that we shall rend the Union asunder at a blow. That I think not likely to take place, for the South sees the peril and its own ruin.

II. The next hypothesis is, Freedom may triumph over Slavery. That was the expectation once, at the time of the Declaration of Independence; nay, at the formation of the Constitution. But only two national steps have been taken against Slavery since then,—one the Ordinance of 1787, the other the abolition of the African Slave-trade; really that was done in 1788, formally twenty years after. In the individual States the white man's freedom enlarges every year; but the Federal Government becomes more and more addicted to

Slavery. This hypothesis does not seem very likely to be adopted.

III. Shall Slavery destroy Freedom? It looks very much like it. Here are nine great steps, openly taken since '87, in favor of Slavery. First, America put Slavery into the Constitution. Second, out of old soil she made four new Slave States. Third, America, in 1793, adopted Slavery as a Federal institution, and guaranteed her protection for that kind of property as for no other. Fourth, America bought the Louisiana territory in 1803, and put Slavery into it. Fifth, she thence made Louisiana, Missouri, and then Arkansas Slave States. Sixth, she made Slavery perpetual in Florida. Seventh, she annexed Texas. Eighth, she fought the Mexican War, and plundered a feeble sister republic of California, Utah, and New Mexico, to get more Slave Soil. Ninth, America gave ten millions of money to Texas to support Slavery, passed the Fugitive Slave Bill, and has since kidnapped men in New England, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, in all the East, in all the West, in all the Middle States. All the great cities have kidnapped their own citizens. Professional Slave-hunters are members of New England Churches; kidnappers sit down at the Lord's table in the city of Cotton, Chauncey, and Mayhew. In this very year, before it is half through, America has taken two more steps for the destruction of freedom. The repeal of the Missouri Compromise and the enslavement of Nebraska: that is the tenth step. Here is the eleventh: The Mexican Treaty, giving away ten millions of dollars and buying a little strip of worthless land, solely that it may serve the cause of Slavery.

Here are eleven great steps openly taken towards the ruin of Liberty in America. Are these the worst? Very far from it! Yet more dangerous things have been done in secret.

I. Slavery has corrupted the Mercantile Class. Almost all the leading merchants of the North are Pro-slavery men. They hate freedom, hate your freedom and mine! This is the only Christian country in which commerce is hostile to freedom.

II. See the corruption of the Political Class. There are forty thousand officers of the Federal Government. Look at them in Boston,—their character is as well known as this Hall. Read their journals in this city,—do you catch a whisper of freedom in them? Slavery has sought its menial servants,—men basely born and basely bred: it has corrupted

them still further, and put them in office. America, like Russia, is the country for mean men to thrive in. Give him time and mire enough, a worm can crawl as high as an eagle flies. . State rights are sacrificed at the North; centralization goes on with rapid strides; State laws are trodden under foot. The Northern President is all for Slavery. The Northern Members of the Cabinet are for Slavery; in the Senate, fourteen Northern Democrats were for the enslavement of Nebraska; in the House of Representatives, forty-four Northern Democrats voted for the bill, — fourteen in the Senate, forty-four in the House; fifty-eight Northern men voted against the conscience of the North and the Law of God. Only eight men out of all the South could be found friendly to justice and false to their own local idea of injustice. The present administration, with its supple tools of tyranny, came into office while the cry of "No Higher Law" was echoing through the land!

III. Slavery has debauched the Press. How many leading journals of commerce and politics in the great cities do you know that are friendly to Freedom and opposed to Slavery? Out of the five large daily commercial papers in Boston, Whig or Democratic, I know of only one that has spoken a word for freedom this great while. The American newspapers are poor defenders of American liberty. Listen to one of them, speaking of the last kidnapping in Boston: "We shall need to employ the same measures of coercion as are necessary in monarchical countries." There is always some one ready to do the basest deeds. Yet there are some noble journals,— political and commercial,— such as the *New York Tribune* and *Evening Post*.

IV. Then our Colleges and Schools are corrupted by Slavery. I do not know of five colleges in all the North which publicly appear on the side of freedom. What the hearts of the presidents and professors are, God knows, not I. The great crime against humanity, practical atheism, found ready support in Northern colleges, in 1850 and 1851. Once the common reading books of our schools were full of noble words. Read the school-books now made by Yankee pedlers of literature, and what liberal ideas do you find there? They are meant for the Southern market. Slavery must not be offended!

V. Slavery has corrupted the Churches! There are twenty-eight thousand Protestant clergymen in the United States. There are noble hearts, true and just men among them, who have fearlessly borne witness to the truth. I need not mention

their names. Alas! they are not very numerous; I should not have to go over my fingers many times to count them all. I honor these exceptional men. Some of them are old, far older than I am; older than my father need have been; some of them are far younger than I; nay, some of them younger than my children might be: and I honor these men for the fearless testimony which they have borne,—the old, the middle-aged, and the young. But they are very exceptional men. Is there a minister in the South who preaches against Slavery? How few in all the North!

Look and see the condition of the Sunday-schools. In 1853 the Episcopal Methodists had 9,438 Sunday-schools; 102,732 Sunday-school teachers; 525,008 scholars. There is not an Anti-slavery Sunday-school in the compass of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Last year, in New York, they issued, on an average, two thousand bound volumes every day in the year, not a line against Slavery in them. They printed also two thousand pamphlets every day; there is not a line in them all against Slavery; they printed more than two hundred and forty million pages of Sunday-school books, not a line against Slavery in them all; not a line showing that it is wicked to buy and sell a man, for whom, according to the Methodist Episcopal Church, Christ died!

The Orthodox Sunday School Union spent last year \$248,201; not a cent against Slavery, our great National Sin. They print books by the million. Only one of them contains a word against Slavery; that is Cowper's "Task," which contains these words,—my mother taught them to me when I was a little boy, and sat in her lap:—

"I would not have a slave to till my ground,
To carry me, to fan me when I sleep,
And tremble when I wake, for all the wealth
That sinews, bought and sold, have ever earned!"

You all know it: if you do not, you had better learn and teach it to your children. That is the only Anti-slavery work they print. Once they published a book written by Mr. Gallaudet, which related the story, I think, of the selling of Joseph: at any rate, it showed that Egyptian Slavery was wrong. A little girl in a Sunday-school in one of the Southern States one day said to her teacher, "If it was wrong to make Joseph a Slave, why is it not wrong to make Dinah and Sambo and Chloe

Slaves?" The Sunday-school teacher and the Church took the alarm, and complained of the Sunday School Union: "You are poisoning the South with your religion, telling the children that Slavery is wicked." It was a serious thing, "dissolution of the Union," "levying war," or, at least, "misdemeanor," for aught I know, "obstructing an officer of the United States." What do you think the Sunday School Union did? It suppressed the book! It printed one Sunday-school book which had a line against Egyptian Slavery and then suppressed it; and it cannot be had to-day! Amid all their million books there is not a line against Slavery, save what Cowper sung. There are five million Sunday-school scholars in the United States, and there is not a Sunday-school manual which has got a word against Slavery in it.

You all know the American Tract Society. Last year the American Tract Society in Boston spent \$79,983.46; it visited more than fourteen thousand families; it distributed 3,334,920 tracts,—not a word against Slavery in them all. The American Tract Society in New York last year visited 568,000 families, containing three million persons; it spent for home purposes \$406,707, for foreign purposes \$422,294; it distributed tracts in English, French, German, Dutch, Danish, Swedish, Norwegian, Italian, Hungarian, and Welsh— and it did not print one single line nor whisper a single word against this great national sin of Slavery! Nay, worse: if it finds English books which suit its general purpose, but containing matter adverse to Slavery, it strikes out all the Anti-slavery matter, then prints and circulates the book. Is the Tract Society also managed by Jesuits from the Roman Church?

At this day 600,000 Slaves are directly and personally owned by men who are called "professing Christians," "members in good fellowship" of the churches of this land; 80,000 owned by Presbyterians, 225,000 by Baptists, 250,000 owned by Methodists,—600,000 Slaves in this land owned by men who profess themselves Christians, and in churches sit down to take the Lord's Supper, in the name of Christ and God! There are ministers who own their fellow-men,—"bought with a price."

Does this not look as if Slavery were to triumph over Freedom?

VI. Slavery corrupts the Judicial Class. In America, especially in New England, no class of men has been so much re-

spected as the judges; and for this reason: we have had wise, learned, excellent men for our judges; men who revered the Higher Law of God, and sought by human statutes to execute Justice. You all know their venerable names, and how reverentially we have looked up to them. Many of them are dead; some are still living, and their hoary hairs are a crown of glory on a judicial life, without judicial blot. But of late Slavery has put a different class of men on the benches of the Federal Courts,—mere tools of the government; creatures which get their appointment as pay for past political service, and as pay in advance for iniquity not yet accomplished. You see the consequences. Note the zeal of the Federal Judges to execute iniquity by statute and destroy Liberty. See how ready they are to support the Fugitive Slave Bill, which tramples on the spirit of the Constitution, and its letter, too; which outrages Justice and violates the most sacred principles and precepts of Christianity. Not a United States Judge, Circuit or District, has uttered one word against that "bill of abominations." Nay, how greedy they are to get victims under it! No wolf loves better to rend a lamb into fragments than these judges to kidnap a Fugitive Slave, and punish any man who dares to speak against it. You know what has happened in Fugitive Slave Bill Courts. You remember the "miraculous" rescue of Shadrach: the peaceable snatching of a man from the hands of a cowardly kidnapper was "high treason"; it was "levying war." You remember the "trial" of the rescuers! Judge Sprague's charge to the Grand Jury that, if they thought the question was which they ought to obey, the law of man or the Law of God, then they must "Obey both!" serve God and Mammon, Christ and the Devil, in the same act! You remember the "trial," the "ruling" of the Bench, the swearing on the stand, the witness coming back to alter and "enlarge his testimony" and have another gird at the prisoner! You have not forgotten the trials before Judge Kane at Philadelphia, and Judge Grier at Christiana and Wilkes-Barre.

These are natural results of causes well known. You cannot escape a Principle. Enslave a negro, will you? — you doom to bondage your own sons and daughters, by your own act. . . .

All this looks as if the third hypothesis would be fulfilled, and Slavery triumph over Freedom; as if the nation would

expunge the Declaration of Independence from the scroll of time, and, instead of honoring Hancock and the Adamses and Washington, do homage to Kane and Grier and Curtis and Hallatt and Loring. Then the preamble to our Constitution might read "to establish injustice, insure domestic strife, hinder the common defence, disturb the general welfare, and inflict the curse of bondage on ourselves and our posterity." Then we shall honor the Puritans no more, but their Prelatical tormentors; nor reverence the Great Reformers, only the Inquisitors of Rome. Yea, we may tear the name of Jesus out of the American Bible; yes, God's name. . . .

See the steady triumph of Despotism! Ten years more like the ten years past, and it will be all over with the liberties of America. Everything must go down, and the heel of the tyrant will be on our neck. It will be all over with the Rights of Man in America, and you and I must go to Austria, to Italy, or to Siberia for our freedom; or perish with the liberty which our fathers fought for and secured to themselves,—not to their faithless sons! Shall America thus miserably perish? Such is the aspect of things to-day!

But are the people alarmed? No, they fear nothing; only the tightness in the money market! Next Tuesday at sunrise every bell in Boston will ring joyously; every cannon will belch sulphurous Welcome from its brazen throat. There will be processions,—the Mayor and the Aldermen and the Marshal and the Naval Officer, and, I suppose, the "Marshal's Guard," very appropriately taking their places. There is a chain on the Common to-day: it is the same chain that was around the Court House in 1851; it is the chain that bound Sims; now it is a festal chain. There are mottoes about the Common,— "They mutually pledged to each other their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor." I suppose it means that the mayor and the kidnappers did this. "The spirit of '76 still lives." Lives, I suppose, in the Supreme Court of Fugitive Slave Bill judges. "Washington, Jefferson, and their compatriots!—their names are sacred in the heart of every American." That, I suppose, is the opinion of Thomas Sims and of Anthony Burns. And opposite the great Park Street Church,—where a noble man is this day, I trust, discoursing noble words, for he has never yet been found false to freedom,— "Liberty and Independence, our Fathers' Legacy!—God forbid that we their sons should prove recreant to the trust!"

It ought to read, "God forgive us that we their sons have proved so recreant to the trust!" So they will celebrate the Fourth of July, and call it "Independence Day"! The foolish press of France, bought and beaten and trodden on by Napoleon the Crafty, is full of talk about the welfare of the "Great Nation"! Philip of Macedon was conquering the Athenian allies town by town; he destroyed and swept off two-and-thirty cities, selling their children as Slaves. All the Cassandrian eloquence of Demosthenes could not rouse degenerate Athens from her idle sleep. She also fell,—the fairest of all free States; corrupted first,—forgetful of God's Higher Law. Shall America thus perish, all immature!

So was it in the days of old: they ate, they drank, they planted, they builded, they married, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and the Flood came and devoured them all!

Well, is this to be the end? Was it for this the Pilgrims came over the sea? Does Forefathers' Rock assent to it? Was it for this that the New England clergy prayed, and their prayers became the law of the land for a hundred years? Was it for this that Cotton planted in Boston a little branch of the Lord's vine, and Roger Williams and Higginson—he still lives in an undegenerate son—did the same in the city which they called of Peace, Salem? Was it for this that Eliot carried the Gospel to the Indians? that Chauncey, and Edwards, and Hopkins, and Mayhew, and Channing, and Ware labored and prayed? for this that our fathers fought,—the Adamses, Washington, Hancock? for this that there was an eight years' war, and a thousand battlefields? for this the little monuments at Acton, Concord, Lexington, West Cambridge, Danvers, and the great one over there on the spot which our fathers' blood made so red? Shall America become Asia Minor? New England, Italy? Boston such as Athens,—dead and rotten? Yes! if we do not mend, and speedily mend. Ten years more, and the liberty of America is all gone. We shall fall,—the laugh, the byword, the proverb, the scorn, the mock of the nations, who shall cry against us. Hell from beneath shall be moved to meet us at our coming, and in derision shall it welcome us,—

"The Heir of all the ages, and the youngest born of time!"

We shall lie down with the unrepentant prodigals of old time, damned to everlasting infamy and shame.

Would you have it so? Shall it be?

To-day America is a debauched young man, of good blood, fortune, and family, but the companion of gamesters and brawlers; reeking with wine; wasting his substance in riotous living; in the lap of harlots squandering the life which his mother gave him. Shall he return? Shall he perish? One day may determine.

Shall America thus die? I look to the past,—Asia, Africa, Europe, and they answer, “Yes!” Where is the Hebrew Commonwealth; the Roman Republic; where is liberal Greece,—Athens and many a far-famed Ionian town; where are the Commonwealths of Mediæval Italy; the Teutonic free cities,—German, Dutch, or Swiss? They have all perished. Not one of them is left. Parian Statues of Liberty, sorely mutilated, still remain; but the Parian rock whence Liberty once hewed her sculptures out,—it is all gone. Shall America thus perish? Greece and Italy both answer, “Yes!” I question the last fifty years of American history, and it says, “Yes.” I look to the American pulpit, I ask the five million Sunday-school scholars, and they say, “Yes.” I ask the Federal Court, the Democratic Party, and the Whig, and the answer is still the same.

But I close my eyes on the eleven past missteps we have taken for Slavery; on that sevenfold clandestine corruption; I forget the Whig party; I forget the present Administration; I forget the Judges of the Courts; I remember the few noblest men that there are in society, Church and State; I remember the grave of my father, the lessons of my mother’s life; I look to the Spirit of this Age,—it is the nineteenth century, not the ninth; I look to the history of the Anglo-Saxons in America, and the history of Mankind; I remember the story and the song of Italian and German Patriots; I recall the dear words of those great-minded Greeks,—Ionian, Dorian, *Ætolian*; I remember the Romans who spoke and sang and fought for truth and right; I recollect those old Hebrew Prophets, earth’s nobler sons, Poets and Saints; I call to mind the greatest, noblest, purest soul that ever blossomed in this dusty world;—and I say, “No!” Truth shall triumph, Justice shall be law! And if America fail, though she is one-fortieth of God’s family, and it is a great loss, there are other nations behind us; our Truth shall not perish, even if we go down.

But we shall not fail! I look into your eyes,—young men

and women, thousands of you, and men and women far enough from young! I look into the eyes of fifty thousand other men and women whom in the last eight months I have spoken to face to face, and they say, "No! America shall not fail!" I remember the women, who were never found faithless when a sacrifice was to be offered to great principles; I look up to my God, and I look into my own heart, and I say, We shall not fail! We shall not fail!

THEODORE PARKER.

FROM THE ADDRESS BY RALPH WALDO EMERSON AT THE
MEMORIAL MEETING AT MUSIC HALL, BOSTON,
JUNE 15, 1860.

It is plain to me that Theodore Parker has achieved a historic immortality here, that he has so woven himself in these few years into the history of Boston that he can never be left out of your annals. It will not be in the acts of city councils, nor of obsequious mayors; nor, in the State House, the proclamations of governors, with their failing virtue,—failing them at critical moments,—that coming generations will study what really befell, but in the plain lessons of Theodore Parker in this Music Hall, in Faneuil Hall, or in legislative committee rooms, that the true temper and authentic record of these days will be read. The next generation will care little for the chances of elections that govern governors now, it will care little for fine gentlemen who behaved shabbily; but it will read very intelligently in his rough story, fortified with exact anecdotes, precise with names and dates, what part was taken by each actor,—who threw himself into the cause of humanity and came to the rescue of civilization at a hard pinch and who blocked its course.

The vice charged against America is the want of sincerity in leading men. It does not lie at his door. He never kept back the truth for fear to make an enemy. But, on the other hand, it was complained that he was bitter and harsh, that his zeal burned with too hot a flame. It is so difficult, in evil times, to escape this charge! for the faithful preacher, most of all. It

was his merit, like Luther, Knox, and Linzer, and John Baptist, to speak tart truth when that was peremptory and when there were few to say it. His commanding merit as a reformer is this; that he insisted beyond all measure — I cannot think of one rival — that the ~~essence~~ of Christianity is its practical morals; it is therefore use, or it is nothing; and if you combine it with sharp trading, or with ordinary city ambitions, to glaze over municipal corruption, or private intemperance, or successful fraud, or immoral politics, or unjust wars, or the cheating of Indians, or the robbery of frontier nations, or leaving your principles at home to follow on the high seas, or in Europe, a supple compunction to tyrants, it is a hypocrisy, and the truth is not in you: and no love of religious music, or of dreams of ~~Swedenborg~~, or praise of John Wesley or of Jeremy Taylor, can save you from the Satan which you are.

His ministry fell on a political crisis also, — on the years when Southern slavery broke over its old banks, made new and vast pretensions, and wrung from the weakness or treachery of Northern people fatal concessions in the Fugitive Slave Bill and the repeal of the Missouri Compromise. Two days, bitter in the memory of Boston, the days of the rendition of Sims and of Burns, made the occasion of his most remarkable discourse. He kept nothing back. In terrible earnest he denounced the public crime, and meted out to every official, high and low, his due portion. By the incessant power of his statement he made and held a party. It was his great service to freedom. He took away the reproach of silent consent that would otherwise have lain against the indignant minority by uttering in the hour and place wherein these outrages were done the stern protest . . .

Theodore Parker was a son of the soil, charged with the energy of New England, strong, eager, inquisitive of knowledge, of a diligence that never tired, upright, of a haughty independence, yet the gentlest of companions; a man of study, fit for a man of the world; with decided opinions and plenty of power to state them; rapidly pushing his studies so far as to leave few men qualified to sit as his critics. He elected his part of duty, or accepted nobly that assigned him in his rare constitution. Wonderful acquisition of knowledge, a rapid wit that heard all, and welcomed all that came, by seeing its bearing. Such was the largeness of his reception of facts and

his skill to employ them that it looked as if he were some president of council to whom a score of telegraphs were ever bringing in reports; and his information would have been excessive but for the noble use he made of it ever in the interest of humanity. . . .

There were, of course, multitudes to censure and defame this truth-speaker. But the brave know the brave. Fops, whether in hotels or churches, will utter the fop's opinion, and faintly hope for the salvation of his soul; but his manly enemies, who despised the fops, honored him; and it is well known that his great hospitable heart was the sanctuary to which every soul conscious of an earnest opinion came for sympathy,—alike the brave slaveholder and the brave slave-rescuer. These met in the house of this honest man,—for every sound heart loves a responsible person, one who does not in generous company say generous things, and in mean company base things, but says one thing,—now cheerfully, now indignantly,—but always because he must, and because he sees that, whether he speak or refrain from speech, this is said over him; and history, nature, and all souls testify to the same.

Ah, my brave brother! it seems as if, in a frivolous age, our loss were immense, and your place cannot be supplied. But you will already be consoled in the transfer of your genius, knowing well that the nature of the world will affirm to all men, in all times, that which for twenty-five years you valiantly spoke; that the winds of Italy murmur the same truth over your grave; the winds of America over these bereaved streets; that the sea which bore your mourners home affirms it, the stars in their courses, and the inspirations of youth; whilst the polished and pleasant traitors to human rights, with perverted learning and disgraced graces, rot and are forgotten with their double tongue saying all that is sordid for the corruption of man.

A complete uniform American edition of the works of Theodore Parker is a desideratum. There is an English edition, carefully edited many years ago by Frances Power Cobbe; but this is now rare. Two volumes of this English edition are devoted to Parker's Anti-slavery discourses. Most of these are also contained in four volumes of addresses prepared for the press by Parker himself in his lifetime, but now out of print. The famous address on Webster, the discourses following the rendition of Sims and Burns, addresses before the Anti-slavery Society, and various sermons on slavery are included in these volumes. There are many slumes of

Parker's religious works. His lectures on Franklin, Washington, John Adams, and Jefferson were published in a volume entitled "Historic Americans."

There are two valuable biographies of Parker, that by Weiss in two volumes, and the later, briefer, and more interesting work by Frothingham. Albert Réville's little book on Parker has been translated; and there are important sketches and eulogies by Wendell Phillips, James Freeman Clarke, Higginson, Johnson, Emerson, and others. Extracts from Emerson's eulogy are given in the present leaflet.